

Four Mile Bridge (Bridge over Elk River)  
Spanning Elk River on County Road 42  
Steamboat Springs vicinity  
Routt County  
Colorado

HAER No. CO-60

HAER  
COLO,  
54-STESPY  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior  
P. O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Four Mile Bridge  
(Bridge over Elk River)

HAER No. CO-60

Location: Spanning Elk River on County Road 42, 6.8 miles  
northwest of Steamboat Springs, Routt County, Colorado  
N1/4 S6, T6N, R85W

UTM: 13.3345255586540  
Quad: Mad Creek

Date of Construction: 1900

Builder/Designer: Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Canton, Ohio

Present Owner: Routt County  
Routt County Courthouse  
5th and Lincoln  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Original Use: Vehicular bridge

Present Use: Vehicular bridge

Significance: The oldest vehicular bridge over the Elk River, the Four Mile Bridge is also the oldest bridge in Routt County and shares the distinction as the oldest bridge in northwest Colorado with the Hay'e Ranch Bridge (RBO3) over the White River in Rio Blanco County. It is one of the last bridges erected by the Wrought Iron Bridge Company, following the consolidation of that firm into the American Bridge Company in 1900. although a common bridge type (pin-connected Pratt through truss), this span is notable for its unaltered stone abutments and steel superstructure. In pristine condition and setting, it is a significant example of early truss construction.

Compiler: Clayton Fraser and Carl Hallberg  
Fraserdesign  
Loveland, Colorado

November 22, 1983

## I. HISTORY

On October 1, 1900, the Routt County commissioners opened construction bids for two steel bridges, this span over the Elk River and another over the Bear (Yampa) River. Contracts for both were awarded to the Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Canton, Ohio.; this bridge for \$3,095, the other for \$6,098. Erection began later that year and was completed by April 1901. Despite its lightweight components and lack of top lateral bracing for the verticals, this pinned Pratt through truss has remained in place, unaltered and in relatively good condition.

## II. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Span number:	1
Span length:	119 feet
Overall length:	122 feet
Overall height:	20 feet
Clearance height:	13 feet, 11 inches
Roadway width:	14 feet 2 inches
End/top chord:	2 channels with cover and batten plates
Bottom chord:	2 rectangular eyebars
Vertical:	2 round eyebars and end panel; 2 channels with lacing
Diagonal:	2 rectangular eyebars; 1 square eyebar with turnbuckle
Floor/decking:	timber decking and stringers with steel floor beams
Substructure:	ashlar stone wingwalls

## III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Structure Inventory and Appraisal: 107004200.90045. Colorado Department of Highways, Denver, Colorado.

Routt County Commissioners' Minutes: October 1, 1900 (Book 2, page 247), November 7, 1900 (Book 2, page 256), January 7, 1901 (Book 2, page 257), January 7, 1901 (Book 3, page 268), April 1, 1901 (Book 2, page 272). Routt County courthouse, Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Field inspection by Clayton Fraser and Carl Hallberg, October 17, 1983.

James Douglas, Routt County engineer. Oral interview with Clayton Fraser, October 17, 1983.

"Organization of the American Bridge Company," Electrical World and Engineer, Vol. XXXVI, Number 1 (July 7, 1900), page 38.